From: Sergio Finkielsztein
To: Simmons, Denise
Subject: Cambridge City Council Resolution to Boycott HP
Date: Tuesday, April 17, 2018 9:09:45 AM

Dear Cambridge Council Member Simmons,

As a resident of the commonwealth of Massachusetts I find the upcoming resolution vote against Hewlett Packard very concerning for the following reasons:

1) Singling Out Israel and Holding It to a Unique Ethical Standard Would Raise Troubling Questions

Even were we to assume (and we don't) that everything Israel's detractors say is true, why would the Cambridge City Council choose to single out HP and Israel? There are literally thousands of American companies that are working overseas and engaged in transactions that could be tied to questionable human rights practices. Energy companies like Aramco in Saudi Arabia (persecution of religious minorities, women and members of the LGBTQ community); technology and consumer companies like Apple and Foxconn with China (child and slave labor); US corporations and investors providing major investment in Duterte's Philippines (extrajudicial killings, children's rights violations, attacks on journalists, human trafficking); destruction of indigenous habitats in Brazil by international and U.S. mining and farming interests. This list could fill pages, including numerous companies with Cambridge contacts.

It would be one thing if the Cambridge City Council elected to adopt a foreign policy that it applied without prejudice to nations and companies around the world. In this instance, however, it is overlooking scores of other situations far more troubling than the worst accusations made against Israel and electing to support dubious and largely unexamined claims made by an outside organization. The circumstances invite troubling speculation as to why Israel is being held to an ethical standard that the Cambridge City Council holds to no others, including itself.

As *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman explains, "Criticizing Israel is not anti-Semitic, and saying so is vile. But singling out Israel for opprobrium and international sanction out of all proportion to any other party in the Middle East is anti-Semitic, and not saying so is dishonest."

2) The Cambridge City Council Would Hold Israel to a Standard That It Does Not Apply to Itself

On September 11, 2017, the Cambridge City Council issued a policy order declaring that "the City of Cambridge and the City of Dongguan [China] would mutually benefit from promoting contact between our governments, non-profits, business and research and educational institutions...." It turns out that even a cursory investigation would have revealed that

Dongguan is a toy manufacturing center that has produced toys for Disney, Mattel and others in factories that, according to China Labor Watch, allow a wide range of labor rights violations. These have included mandatory overtime, wages below the legal minimum, unpaid overtime wages, unpaid insurance, harsh and high-pressure working conditions, poor living conditions, and abusive management. But, the Cambridge City Council said nothing about this in its policy order. It ignored well documented human rights concerns, welcomed a special relationship and to date has not proposed a boycott of products made in Dongguan factories, which may find their way into Cambridge Schools and elsewhere. Regrettably, there are other examples of the City Council's moral myopia. And together these situations deepen the question as to why Israel alone is to be singled out by the Cambridge City Council without even a modest effort to understand the underlying issues or protect fundamental due process.

If these reasons alone are not compelling enough, perhaps consider the fact that BDS initiatives have been rejected by national and Massachusetts leaders, including Barack Obama, Bernie Sanders, Keith Ellison, Cory Booker, John Kerry, Ed Markey, Elizabeth Warren, Michael Capuano, Joe Kennedy, Deval Patrick and scores more prominent national leaders, including governors of all 50 states.

I urge you to please consider the ramifications of your decision and vote no to Cambridge City Council Resolution to Boycott HP.

Regards,

Sergio Finkielsztein